

Top Secret



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SOUTH VIETNAM: The powerful An Quang Buddhists apparently have decided that the only course open to them in the current South Vietnamese political situation is to stay on the sidelines.

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[REDACTED] An Quang leaders are pleased with their sect's showing in the recent lower house elections in which the An Quang emerged with by far the largest bloc of seats won by opposition groups. They do not believe they can use their strength against President Thieu, however, because much as they dislike Thieu, they regard any likely alternative--including Vice President Ky, a Communist take-over, or simply increased political turmoil--as even worse. Thus they believe they have no choice but to stay aloof from any elements actively working for Thieu's downfall. Indeed, one prominent An Quang senator says the sect is still interested in making a deal with Thieu.

Although the An Quang leadership is unlikely to encourage any action against Thieu in the next few weeks, some of the sect's monks, particularly in Hue and Da Nang, may act on their own. Moreover, the An Quang's public attitude toward Thieu's referendum is almost certain to remain negative. An Quang leader Thich Tri Quang [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] would not oppose a referendum if the populace is offered a genuine opportunity to vote yes or no. The forthcoming vote, in which those opposed to Thieu must spoil their ballots in order to register their displeasure, is most unlikely to meet Tri Quang's criteria. [REDACTED]

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NOTES

INDIA-PAKISTAN: On 9 September units of the 1st Armored Division, India's only armored division, and an independent armored brigade began moving toward Amritsar near the India - West Pakistan border. Although the exact number of troops involved is unknown, the authorized strength of the full division and the independent brigade is about 23,000 men. The only previously known shift of Indian forces was the movement toward the border of an armored and infantry brigade earlier this summer. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] this move is intended to signal to the Pakistani Government and the Pakistani Army that New Delhi is prepared to meet and deal with any Pakistani incursions and to discourage any notion Islamabad may have that a pre-emptive strike against India could succeed. [REDACTED]

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INTER-GERMAN TALKS: Pankow appears adamantly opposed to a discussion of textual language differences in the next round of inter-German talks scheduled for 14 September. The East German party daily on 10 September contended that tomorrow's Bahr-Kohl meeting should deal exclusively with general traffic and transit questions and not with translation difficulties. The West Germans had hoped to circumvent the translation problems by getting the East Germans to acknowledge the Allied version which Bonn used in a message sent to the GDR postal minister on 10 September regarding improvements in routine postal affairs. Although Pankow may ultimately accept a compromise of this sort, it may reject the postal offer at this time in order to spotlight its own role in the inter-German talks. Unless Bonn is willing to concede on the translation issue, the talks could be recessed, at least until after Chancellor Brandt returns from his talks with Brezhnev later this week.

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